Ban on Indian Ayurvedic drugs by Canada

*296. SHRIMATI BIMBA RAIKAR : Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Canada has recently imposed a ban on import of Indian Ayurvedic formulations on the basis of report of its drugs testing labs alleging that these Ayurvedic products contained high levels of metals like lead, mercury, arsenic, etc.;

(b) if so, whether the products such as Shilajit, Kerala Capsules and Mahasudarshan Churna have been declared by Canadian authorities as unfit for human consumption; and

(c) whether Government propose to take up the matter with the Canadian Government for a possible reversal of its ban order?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (DR. ANBUMANI RAMDOSS): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir.

(c) Canadian Government has been officially requested to provide detailed information regarding the methodology of testing and corresponding analysis carried out by them on the basis of which the ban has been imposed. The manufacturers of Ayurvedic medicines mentioned in the ban have been directed to get safety/toxity studies carried out for their products by National Accreditation Board of Laboratories (NABL)/Good Laboratory Practices (GLP) accredited laboratories and send their reports in respect of acute, sub-acute and chronic safety/toxicity drugs studies. The Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) has also undertaken a study on the toxicity of metal based Bhasmas. The Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Department of AYUSH, is committed to standardization and quality control of Ayurveda, Siddha and Unani (ASU) drugs, in pursuance of which a number of initiatives have been taken. These include extension of assistance for State drug testing laboratories, laying down of pharmacopoeial standards, notification of Good Manufacturing Practices (GMP) for compliance by the drug manufacturers, etc. A Golden Triangle Project in partnership with the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) and Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) has also been initiated for scientific validation of existing Ayurveda, Siddha and Unani (ASU) drugs and development of new ASU drugs.